

# Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Waste Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 31 October 2017 in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 5.30 pm  
Concluded 7.45 pm

## Present – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT	GREEN
Gibbons Senior	A Ahmed Berry Mohammed Watson	Stubbs	Love Warnes

## Non-Voting Co-opted Member

Julia Pearson – Bradford Environmental Forum

Observer: Councillor Ferriby

Apologies: Nicola Hoggart – Environment Agency

## Councillor Love in the Chair

### 24. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

In the interests of clarity, Ms Pearson disclosed that she was employed by one of the partner organisations referred to in the presentation on the Biodiversity Scrutiny Review (minute 29).

***ACTION: City Solicitor***

### 25. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

### 26. OUTCOME OF THE PROCUREMENT FOR WASTE TREATMENT SERVICES

Previous Reference: Minute 56 (2016/17)

The Strategic Director (Place) presented a report (**Document “J”**) which informed the Committee of the outcome of the procurement for waste treatment services, following a detailed evaluation of bid submissions by the project team.

Members questioned the Principal Officer for Waste Services in some detail in respect of all aspects of the contract, including:-

- Whether trade waste was included in the contract
- Costings
- The process for dealing with residual waste
- The process for dealing with refuse derived fuel
- Whether issues of odour would continue to occur in areas of Bradford previously affected
- The process for dealing with problems of residents not removing their emptied bins from the kerbside in a timely manner
- Whether the new contract could deal with new housing stock
- What contingency planning was in place

In response, the Principal Officer confirmed that trade waste tonnages were included. He stated that the contract price was a fixed price subject to annual indexation, however, should the price received by the contractor for recycle sales or energy sales exceed a certain threshold, this would trigger a gain share mechanism, resulting in some income coming back to the Council.

He also explained the process for dealing with residual waste, including the location of the contractor's depots which would be used in both Leeds at Valley Farm Road and Bradford at Canal Road. He went on to explain that, once all recyclates had been removed from Bradford's waste, the residue was further treated to create a refuse derived fuel, which would be transported by road to Ferrybridge near Pontefract where it would be thermally treated to produce energy.

He advised that, as residual domestic waste would now be delivered to the Council's two transfer stations, from where it would be bulk hauled to the Valley Farm Road site in Leeds, only a small amount of waste would be dealt with at the Canal Road Depot and this would not be residual waste collected on the refuse round, otherwise known as "black bag waste" so this should reduce the likelihood of future odour problems at this site.

In respect of residents leaving their bins in the street longer than necessary, Members were advised that they should liaise with their local wardens to report and deal with such problems as this was contrary to the Bin Policy and enforcement action could be taken.

Members were also advised that, as the contract was for a twelve year period, with an option for a further three, it included modelling for the impact of population



growth and the new alternate weekly collection policy. The maximum and minimum tonnage levels under the contract were also explained.

In respect of contingency planning, the contract had performance guarantees built in to it; any breakdown of the plant in Leeds would be immediately reported to officers in Bradford. It was stressed that the plant had never broken down since it had begun to be used last year. Contingency capacity existed at the Canal Road site in Bradford and the Leeds Road site in Leeds.

**Resolved –**

- (1) That Document “J” be noted and officers be thanked for their work on the procurement process.**
- (2) That an annual report be presented in respect of performance against key performance indicators for the new waste treatment services contract, beginning in the summer of 2019.**
- (3) That an interim report in respect of the delivery of the new waste treatment services contract be presented in twelve months time.**

***ACTION: Strategic Director, Place***

## **27. MANAGEMENT OF WASTE AND RECYCLING ACTIVITIES**

Previous Reference: Minute 27 (2016/17)

The report of the Strategic Director, Place, (**Document “K”**) provided a description of the current management of waste and gave an update on the work programmes undertaken in 2017 and those planned for 2018 to improve the management of waste to more sustainable levels in line with the Waste Strategy (Municipal Waste Minimisation and Management Strategy 2015).

Members were united in their praise for the work of the team which had dealt with the roll out of the alternate weekly bin collection system, agreeing that any issues reported had been dealt with promptly and efficiently.

A Member queried whether residents were now putting the correct items in their different waste bins and was informed that this had now improved and that residents were much more informed about what waste needed to go in which bin. Members were also advised about the way in which advisors targeted areas where a specific problem was noted and how residents were supported if their local arrangements had changed substantially.

In response to a question regarding whether all homes now had recycling bins, it was confirmed that the number of recycling bins distributed was now very close to



the number of residual bins in operation.

Officers also confirmed that, if a person had a medical complaint which meant that more waste than usual needed to be put in the residual waste bin, they could be provided with a larger bin which would resolve what could be a difficult or sensitive issue for an individual. They agreed with Member concerns that the correct advice should be communicated to Home Care Teams to pass on to their clients and stressed that they contacted such teams whenever they became aware of an issue.

A Member queried whether the term “alternate weekly collection” could be confusing, especially for residents whose home language was not English. He was advised that it most accurately reflected the service provided as a collection was made from each address weekly, with recycling and residual waste being collected alternately.

The Assistant Director, Waste, Fleet and Transport stated that he was very grateful for the thanks expressed to his team and that he would like to thank Members for their positive engagement with the roll out of the new collection system.

The Chair requested, on behalf of the Committee, that a visit to the materials recycling facility be organised. A Member also suggested that video clips showing frontline services such as this be provided so that a positive message could be passed on to residents. He stressed how sickened he was by reports of refuse collection crews being abused as they attempted to do their job.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that, if a bin was slightly overfull and the lid was raised a little, it would still be collected. However, if there was so much additional waste in a bin that the lid had to be completely opened out, the crews were trained to remove the excess, empty the bin, then replace the excess in that bin.

It was also confirmed that the green waste collection fee was both covering its own costs and helping with other costs within the service.

A Member queried whether in cab technology was being correctly used and was advised that crews were well trained in its use and that the technology had recently been upgraded so that the contact centre had access to real time feedback.

In response to a question about collections from apartment blocks when it was apparent that a regular system had not worked well, Members were advised that it was possible to request that a note be recorded on the system to alert crews to deal with such issues.

**Resolved –**



(1) That officers be thanked for their hard work in achieving a successful roll out of the new waste collection system and the consequent reduction in residual waste treatment.

(2) That a progress report be presented in twelve months time.

**ACTION: Strategic Director, Place**

**28. UPDATE ON THE FUEL POVERTY FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION FOR THE BRADFORD DISTRICT AND THE BETTER HOMES YORKSHIRE PROJECT**

Previous Reference: Minute 28 (2016-17)

Members considered **Document “L”** which provided an update on the progress of the programme of work for the Fuel Poverty for Action for the Bradford District and an update on the Better Homes Yorkshire Programme.

In response to detailed questions, Members were advised that:-

- There was a relatively high level of fuel poverty in Bradford, partly due to the nature of the local housing stock.
- A lot of work to relieve fuel poverty has already been undertaken, especially on properties which were straightforward to deal with. However there was still a high number of hard to treat properties
- There was no European Union funding for improving insulation in homes.
- There was currently no control over privately rented properties but in April 2018 new regulations would mean that all rented properties must be rated “E” or above on their Energy Performance Certificate. However there was a concern that this would be difficult to police as no resources had been provided for that.
- There were properties in rural areas of Bradford which did not have mains gas and there was no way to ensure that it was provided, although these areas had relatively low levels of fuel poverty.
- The service promoted the reduction of fuel poverty in any way that it could, including lobbying Government and taking part on consultations with bodies such as WYCA as well as working with private sector partners to deliver home energy improvements to households at risk of fuel poverty.

**Resolved –**

**That a further report on progress of the Programme of Work for the Fuel Poverty Framework be presented in the Autumn of 2018.**

**ACTION: Strategic Director, Corporate Services**

**29. BIODIVERSITY SCRUTINY REVIEW**



As part of the scene setting for the scrutiny review into biodiversity, the Committee received a detailed PowerPoint presentation to assist with establishing the key lines of enquiry and terms of reference for the review.

Following the presentation, Members had both questions and comments in respect of the subject of the review.

A Member asked what measures were being put in place to raise awareness and educate the public about invasive plant species. The Countryside Service Manager commented that this was an interesting and developing area as factors such as climate change meant that species identity was constantly changing.

He was asked about work with school pupils and advised that less work was now undertaken with schools by the Countryside Service because of resource pressures but that schools still ran their own activities at facilities such as the Nell Bank Centre and Buckden House. It would be possible to offer talks or presentations to schools but the possibility of doing field work with groups of children was extremely limited.

Members queried whether more work could be undertaken with the youth service to include older children in work on environmental awareness and whether schools could be encouraged to use boundary land to promote biodiversity.

In response to a question about what advice the Council currently gave on biodiversity, Members were informed that a great deal of officer time was spent on commenting on planning applications. Other than Council owned land, there was a limited audience for advice. It was noted that there was also little that could be done about farming practices on farmland which was not Council owned.

A Member suggested that the issues of street trees and sustainable drainage be included in the review and that the review cover three main areas:-

- What the Council does
- Working with partners
- Raising awareness.

Members concurred that environmental impact should be treated with equal importance as financial impact; that detailed guidance and recommendations to the Executive should be developed to support biodiversity and that policies on issues such as verge cutting should be reviewed.

**Resolved –**

**That draft terms of reference for the Biodiversity Scrutiny Review be presented in November 2017.**

***ACTION: Overview & Scrutiny Lead***

## **30. WORK PROGRAMME - 2017-18**



The report of the Chair of the Committee (**Document “M”**) presented for Members’ consideration the Committee’s work programme for 2017-18.

No resolution was passed in respect of this item.

***No Action***

